

What is claimed is:

1. An isolated telomere from the linear chromosome of an *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*

wherein said telomere is obtainable from a restriction enzyme fragment at the end
5 of said chromosome;

wherein said fragment comprises less than 4,000 nucleotide bases and comprises a segment of consecutive nucleotide bases having at least 90% identity to SEQ ID NO: 1 or SEQ ID NO: 2;

and wherein said telomere is obtained by removing at least said segment from
10 said fragment.

2. An isolated telomere according to claim 1 comprising a covalently-closed end.

3. An isolated telomere according to claim 1 wherein said consecutive nucleotide bases have at least 95% identity to SEQ ID NO: 1 or SEQ ID NO: 2.

4. An isolated telomere according to claim 1 wherein the restriction enzyme
15 producing the fragment comprising SEQ ID NO: 1 is Kpn I.

5. An isolated telomere according to claim 1 wherein the restriction enzyme producing the fragment comprising SEQ ID NO: 2 is Eco RI.

6. A pair of isolated and distinct telomeres obtained from opposite ends of said linear chromosome wherein each of said telomeres has a nucleic acid sequence of a
20 telomere of claim 1.

7. An isolated telomere from the linear chromosome of an *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* having a covalently-closed end,

wherein said telomere is obtainable from a restriction enzyme fragment at the end
of said chromosome;

wherein said fragment comprises less than 4,000 nucleotide bases and comprises a
25 segment of consecutive nucleotide bases having at least 90% identity to SEQ ID NO: 1 or SEQ ID NO: 2;

and wherein said telomere is obtained by removing at least said segment from said fragment.

8. A linear DNA construct for use in producing transgenic plants by *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* transformation, said construct comprising at least an origin of replication and terminal regions obtained from telomeres of claim 1.

9. A linear DNA construct according to claim 8 further comprising at least one DNA
5 segment selected from the group consisting of promoters and selectable markers.

10. A linear DNA construct according to claim 9 having covalently-closed ends.